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THE FOUR CHAMPIONS OF
GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND.

THE FOUR CHAMPIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

By W. MORD and C. ROBINSON
Illustrated by CHAS. ROBINSON



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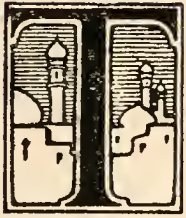
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And he, of course, is the Patron Saint of England.

St. George of Merry England.



he twenty-third of April is a date which every English school-boy should celebrate by some especially brave, kind or self-sacrificing deed.

It is *St. George's Day*, and he, of course, is the patron saint of England. A saint who for hundreds of years past, sailors and soldiers have looked to for help in times of danger, and England is by no means the only land where his name is held in high esteem. St. George was not an Englishman by birth, for he was born sixteen hundred years ago, at Lydda in Palestine, of noble Christian parents of Greek origin, and his name has been honoured all over Europe.

Lydda was under Syrian rule, and in olden times when great storms raged, Syrian sailors would call aloud :

“St. George help us! Oh, help us St. George!”

Whilst in the days of chivalry, English knights in battle encouraged each other to further efforts of valour with the cry :

“St. George for Merry England!”

This put heart into hesitating soldiers and caused them to close up their broken ranks, oft-times preventing defeat.

The same cry sounded in the ears of the Crusaders. Also, when Edward III. was fighting his great battles in France, the English soldiers hearing the familiar call of “Upon them, St. George!” fought with greater dash and courage than before.

When the future St. George was only ten years of age his father, who was governor of Lydda,

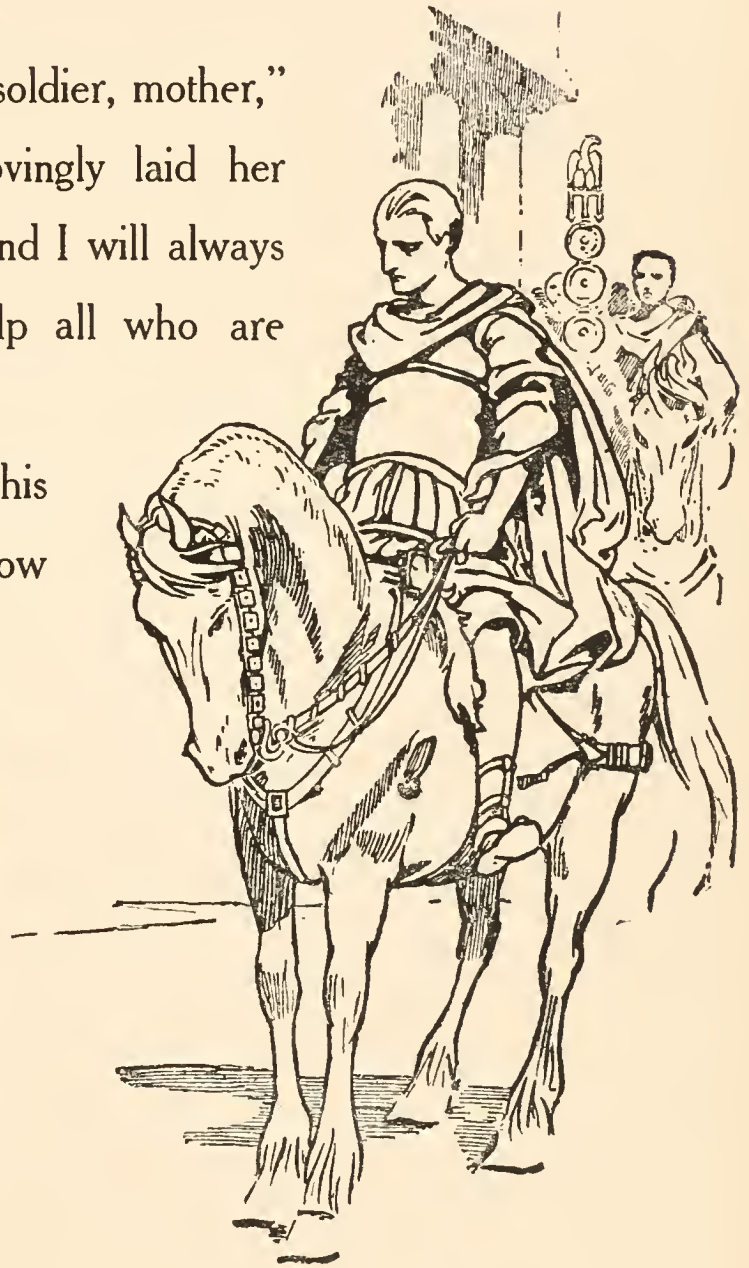
died, and the little boy endeavoured to comfort his weeping mother and sisters by brave words :

“I will be a man now,” he declared, “and will take care of you.”

“I will be a great soldier, mother,” he continued, as she lovingly laid her hand on his shoulder, “and I will always speak the truth and help all who are in distress.”

And all through his life St. George kept the vow he had made as a boy.

After the death of this little hero's father, when the new governor of Lydda



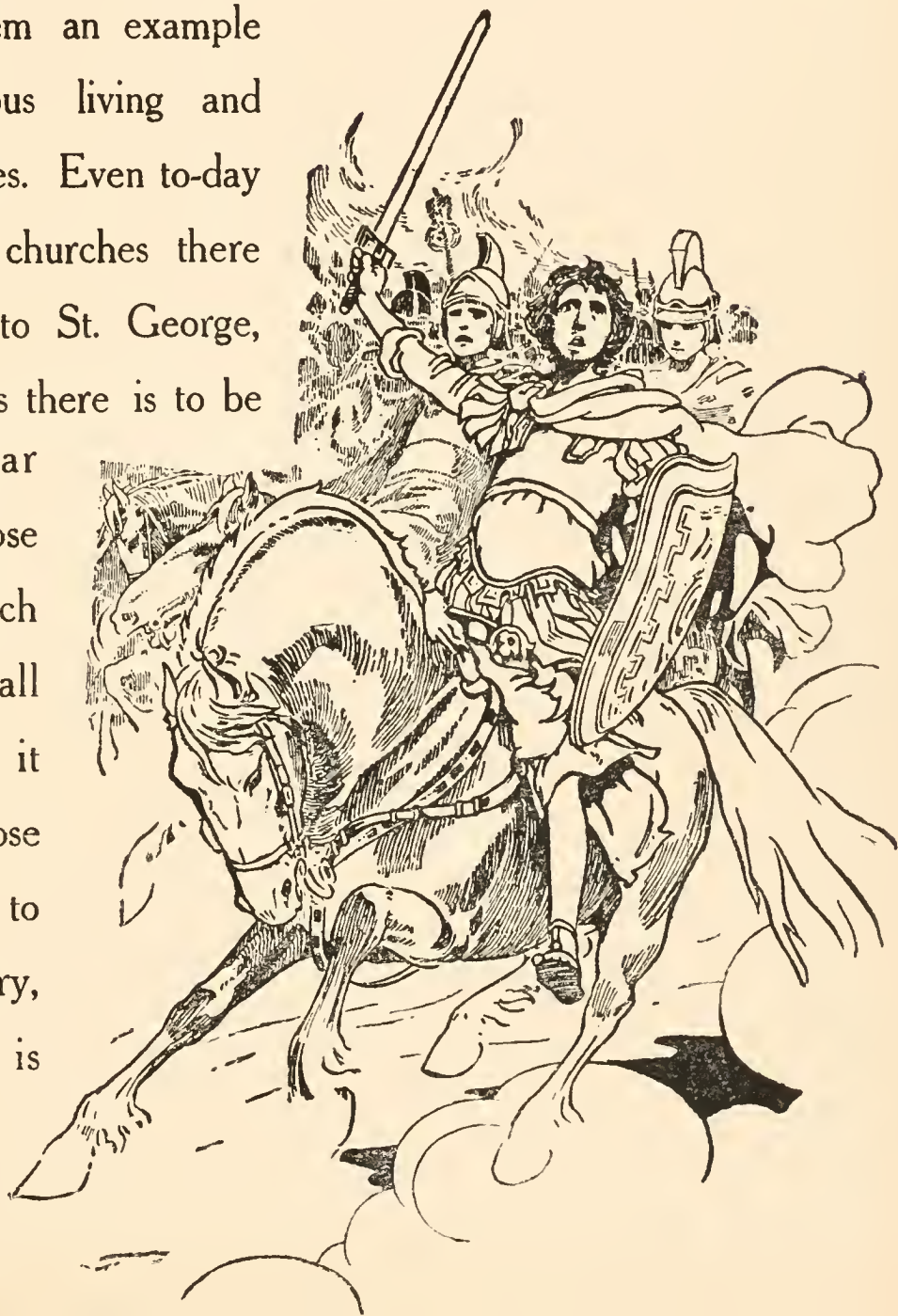
rode into the city he asked to see the son of his predecessor, and he was so pleased with the fearless bearing of the little fellow that he stooped and kissed him. Then, turning to St. George's mother, he offered to take her boy into his household and educate him as his own son and make a brave soldier of him.

The boy, St. George, made good use of his advantages, and some years later when he was sent to the Emperor Diocletian he was given the command of five thousand soldiers and received money out of the Imperial Treasury.

St. George grew up handsome, strong and brave. When he galloped into battle with his drawn sword held on high, crying :

“I am George of Mitilene, and come against you in anger!” the enemy would turn and flee, throwing their weapons to the ground rather than face so brave a warrior.

But not only did he show the people how to be a great soldier during the two years he was in Persia with the Emperor's army, but by his life he set them an example of righteous living and simple tastes. Even to-day there are churches there dedicated to St. George, and always there is to be found near them a rose bush, which reminds all who see it that the rose is sacred to his memory, and this is



the reason given for using the rose in England as our national emblem.

When, after a brief time of independence, Britain had been re-conquered by the Romans, and Constantine, a Roman Emperor, and Helena, his wife, had taken up their residence at Eboracum, *i.e.* York, St. George visited Britain. He was probably sent on an expedition by Diocletian. He doubtless sailed through the Irish Channel, now called St. George's Channel, and landed in Lancaster; and it was most likely during this visit that the Empress Helena was converted to Christianity by St. George, and also her son, afterwards Constantine the Great. And so it was through St. George that the whole Roman world became Christianised, and Paganism was overthrown.

About this time some terrible news reached

St. George. The Emperor Diocletian, at the instigation of his son-in-law, Galerius, was persecuting the Christians, causing great suffering amongst them. So St. George determined to hurry back and visit Diocletian to beg him to show mercy and justice, for he felt this persecution of innocent people to be a fearful crime.

Therefore, he first visited Lydda in order to see his friends before interviewing Diocletian, for he knew that the Emperor would resent his interference, for Christians were greatly despised in those days, and St. George, being a Christian and upholding their cause, would be likely to lose his life. Arriving at Lydda and putting off his armour, his first action was to free all who were in his service ; after which he sold his possessions, and divided the money amongst his relations and retainers.

His friends, fearing for his life, begged him with tears to relinquish his purpose, but he answered them, saying :

“ I am determined to speak for these innocent Christians ; but should you live, and hear I am dead, for Christ’s sake, bring my body back here to be buried.”

So saying, St. George bid his friends farewell and departed.

Now his journey led him to the City of Silene, the inhabitants of which were at that time in great distress. Beyond the city walls, in a desolate waste of land, there was a vast stretch of stagnant water, in which we are told there lived a fierce and terrible dragon. It had been there so long that it was an enormous size, and so cruel had it become that the inhabitants at last determined to put it to death. Therefore, they assembled together in great numbers

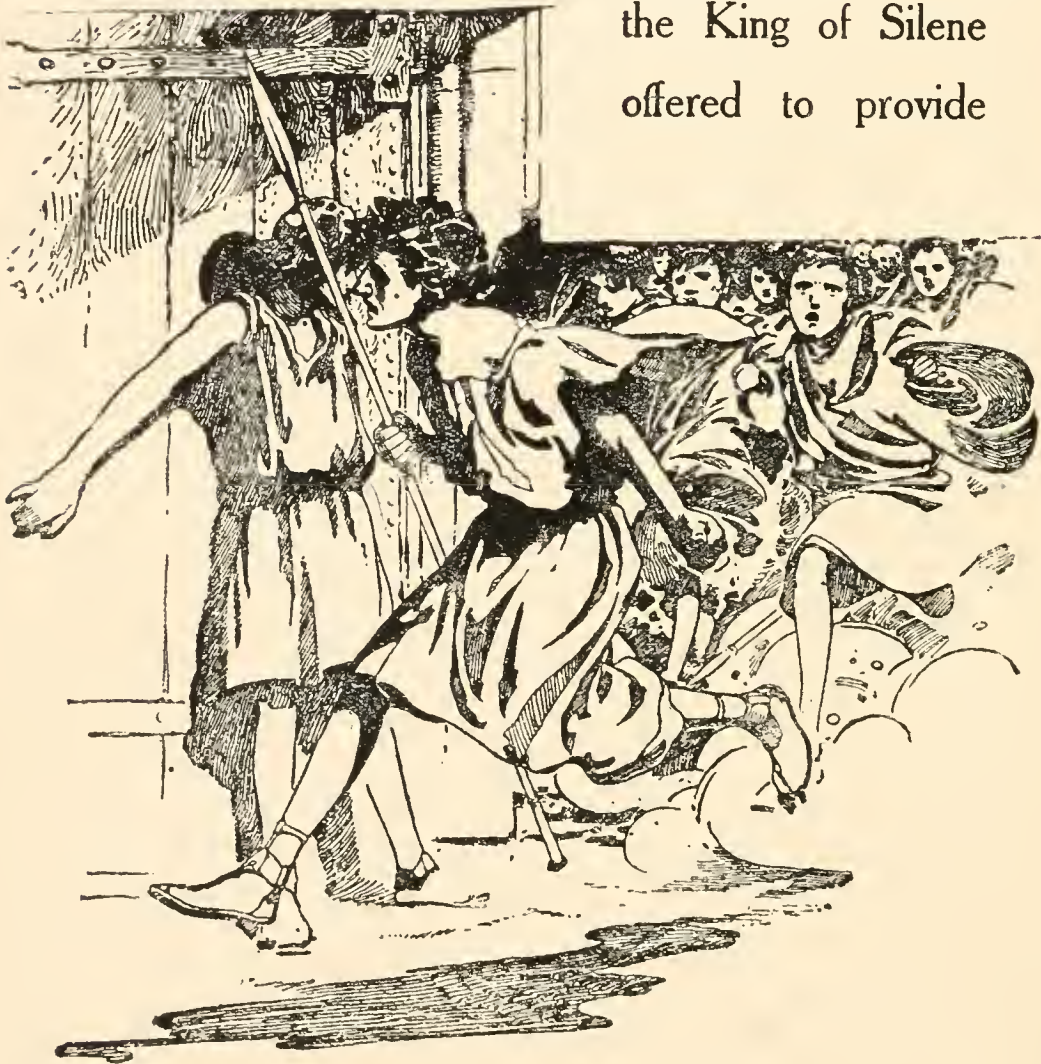


and set out to free themselves from this terrible monster who filled the lives of the peaceful citizens with terror.

But no sooner did the horrible creature lift its huge head from the slimy lake and open wide its cruel jaws than they fled affrighted, the dragon in pursuit, breathing out such poisonous vapours that the citizens were almost overcome.

Finally they managed to reach the city, rush inside, and close the gates, while the dragon stood without, poisoning the city with its pestilential breath.

It is said that in order to appease the monster, the King of Silene offered to provide



two fat sheep a day for its food, whereupon the dragon returned to its watery home, promising to refrain from harming the inhabitants of the city just so long as this provision was regularly supplied.

Soon afterwards Silene was threatened with famine, and owing to the scarceness of food the inhabitants could only provide one sheep per day for their enemy.

But so terrible was the wrath of the dragon upon finding only one sheep when it had expected to find two, that the citizens were compelled the following day to send with the sheep, *a man*, in order that the dragon's enormous appetite should be satisfied !

And this awful sacrifice continued until, the old men having all been devoured by the monster,

the king feared to send the young and strong men lest his city should be left without defenders.

Therefore we are told that he called his people together, and in sorrowful tones bade them prepare to sacrifice their *daughters* to the cruel demands of the dragon they all feared.

Bitter weeping was heard throughout the city as from some homestead a young girl was dragged forth each day to beyond the city gates, and left to await the approach of the hungry dragon.

But at last the day came when all the citizens had been compelled to sacrifice a daughter, and they demanded that their king should make the same sacrifice as they had done. Never, until then, had the king realised how terrible the grief of his people had been. He offered large sums of money, nay all his possessions to the people, if only they would spare the life of the young and beautiful princess.



But all the people had suffered so greatly by the sacrifice of their own children that they hardened their hearts against the king, and cried :

“Nay, we have seen our daughters dragged from us to a horrible death, and now you must share the same fate. Why should you be spared more than we ?”

But, since he was the king, they agreed that his daughter should remain with him for just one week longer.

All too swiftly the week went by for the distressed king. When the terrible day arrived on which the sacrifice was to be made, he had the poor

princess dressed in shimmering white as though for her wedding, then, in broken tones, he blessed her, and kissing her farewell, he led her forth in state to where the dragon came daily for his food. Then leaving her alone, he returned in great anguish of mind to the palace.

And it is said that at that very moment St. George reached the City of Silene, and great was his astonishment at seeing so young and lovely a maiden alone in that desolate place.

In gentle tones he asked her the reason of her unprotected condition.

“Alas! brave warrior,” she cried, “Stay not to question me, lest you also perish!”

The sight of the young girl's fear and distress but determined St. George to remain with her whatever the threatened danger, therefore he answered her:



“Nay, fair maiden, make me acquainted with the cause of thy distress, for it is my will to help thee in the name of Christ.”

Then the Princess, dreading lest the dragon should suddenly appear, begged him to continue

his journey ; hastily telling him of the terrible monster who terrorised over the City of Silene, and was even then coming to devour her as part of the daily sacrifice it demanded from the citizens.

“Go! brave warrior,” she exclaimed, “and seek shelter within the city gate; ’twere far more terrible for one so strong and brave as thou art to fall a victim to this monster’s appetite, than for a weak damsel to be thus devoured.”

Even as she spoke there was heard the roar of the quickly approaching dragon. Upon hearing

this the brave St. George gladly prepared to do battle with the cruel and wicked creature who so filled with misery the lives of this helpless people.





There was heard the roar of the quickly approaching dragon.

Quickly drawing his sword he held it on high so that the Cross carven upon its hilt was plainly seen, and with his spear he made ready to charge the huge beast.

The dragon was totally unprepared for attack, having by this time become accustomed to the unresisting surrender of his victims. So quickly and fiercely did St. George rush to meet it, and so great was



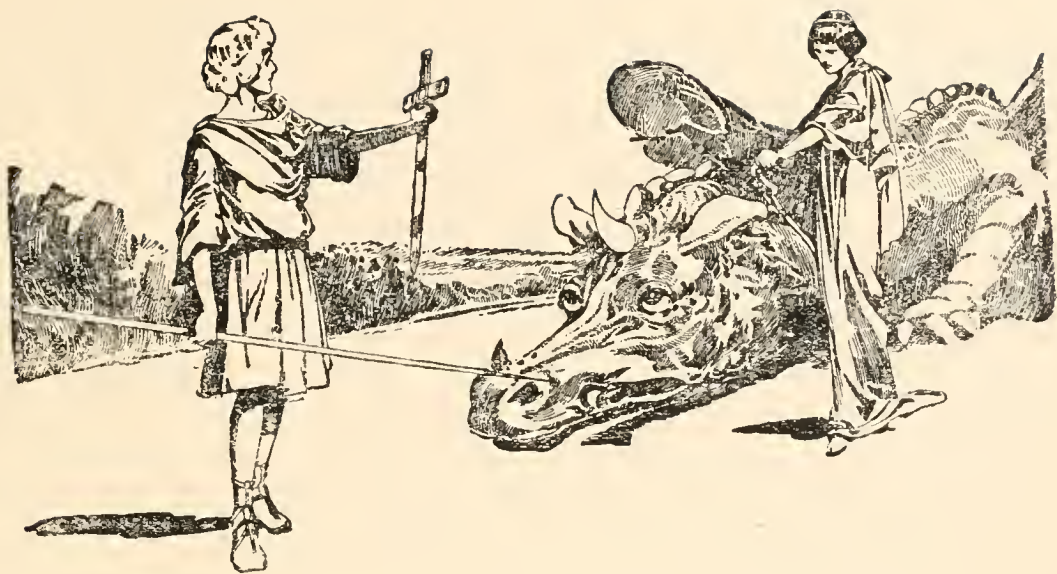
the blow he struck, that the huge monster was speedily rolled over upon the ground.

Thereupon St. George returned to where the terrified Princess stood, her white face covered by her hands, lest she should see the death of so brave a knight.

“Loosen thy girdle, fair maid,” he commanded, in gentle tones, “and bind it round the neck of yonder vanquished beast.”

Scarcely could the Princess be persuaded that there was no further need for fear; nevertheless, re-assured by the presence of her deliverer, she did as he had commanded, approaching the prostrate dragon with great trembling.

Then the dragon, overcome by the mystic power of the Cross on the hilt of the sword which St. George held constantly before its eyes, allowed the girdle to be thrown over its neck and



meekly followed St. George and the princess to the city.

When the citizens saw this strange procession, they fled in fear towards the forests on the hillsides, crying aloud that the terrible monster was coming upon them to devour them and their children.

Upon seeing this St. George hastened forward, calling upon the terror-stricken people to halt and learn of their deliverance.

So great was the fear of the citizens however, for the hideous dragon that had been the cause

of so much suffering in the past, that it was some time before St. George could assure them of their safety.

Finally he gathered them together and spoke of the wonderful power of the Cross, and promised them he would slay the dragon they so greatly feared if, as a mark of gratitude to the Great Power that had delivered them, they would be baptised into the Christian Church.

Thereupon the king and fifteen thousand of his people believed the wonderful story of the Cross which St. George related to them, the power of which against evil, he had clearly shown them by the captivity of the dragon ; and they were baptised into the Christian Church without delay.

Then St. George cut off the head of the dragon before all the people, and so great was its length that it is said to have taken four carts to remove the beast's body from the city.



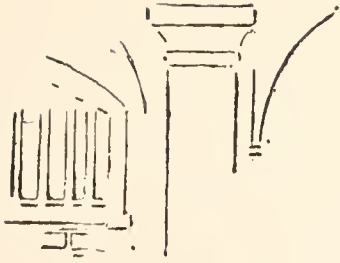
He tore the document to pieces.

Upon seeing the dead dragon the people rejoiced greatly, and brought offering of gold and silver to St. George, not knowing how to sufficiently thank him for their deliverance.

But St. George commanded them to distribute this great wealth amongst the poor and needy, and bidding them farewell, amidst the good wishes of the grateful people he set out from their city gates, and resumed his journey to the Emperor Diocletian, on behalf of the suffering Christians.

After many days of travel, St. George reached Nicomedia, and the first thing that his eyes fell upon as he entered the city gates was the decree of the Emperor against the Christians, which was posted up on the wall, declaring that all who worshipped God should be put to a violent death.

Boldly advancing towards this, to the amazement of all the people that were standing near,



St. George dragged the decree from the wall. Then, before the eyes of the terrified people, he tore the document to pieces.

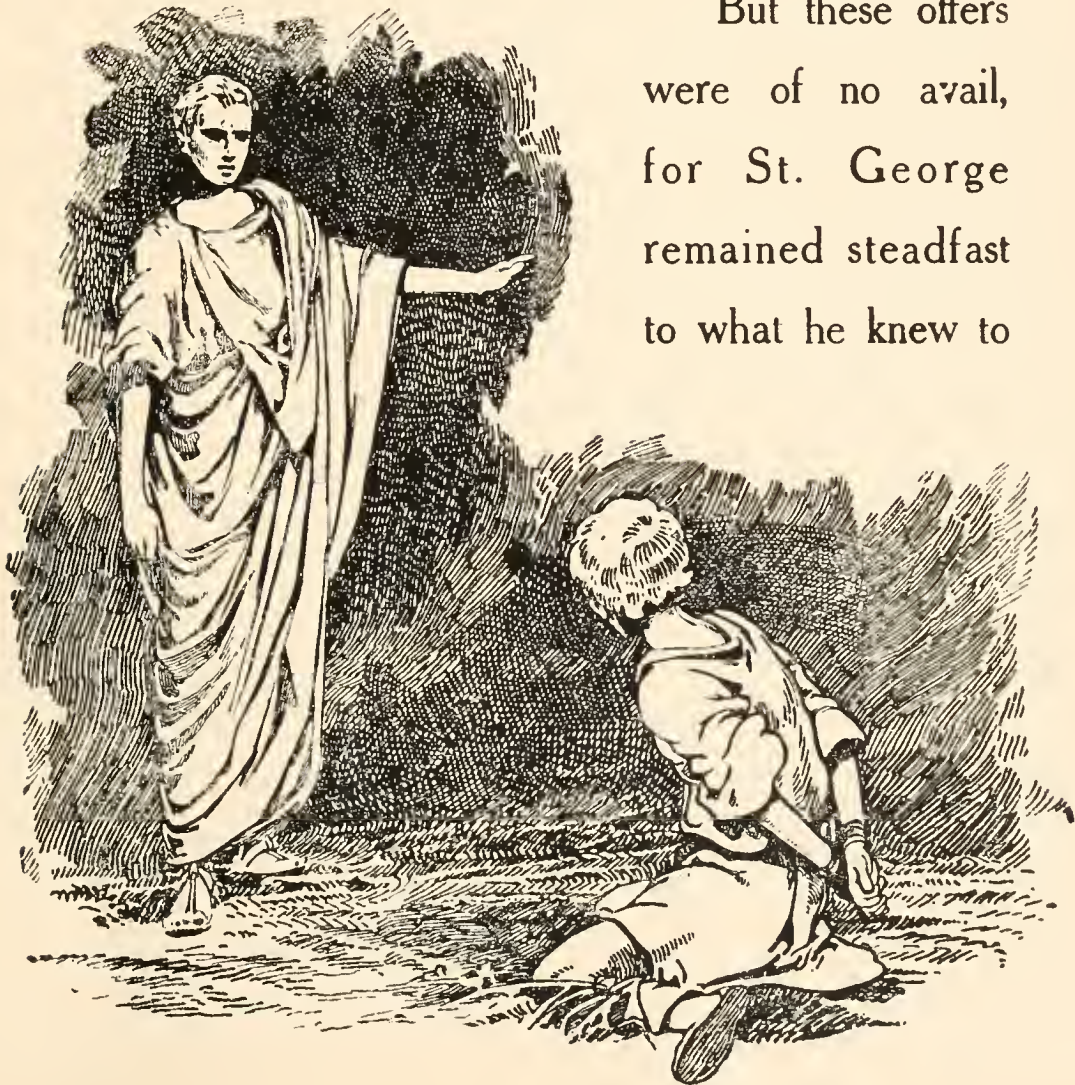
Immediately he was seized by the soldiers and forthwith cast into a dungeon.

Feeling confident that by reason of his former friendship with Diocletian he would not be allowed to remain a prisoner for long, he sent messages to the Emperor, acquainting him of his position.

But to this message Diocletian sent no reply, and there was but little sympathy felt for St. George, for in those days the confession of Christianity was looked upon as a terrible disgrace, nay more, it was considered a crime.

Then the Governor of that city endeavoured by every means in his power to persuade St. George to renounce his faith. He offered him riches and high position, promising to make him a great ruler if he did but worship the heathen gods in their city temples.

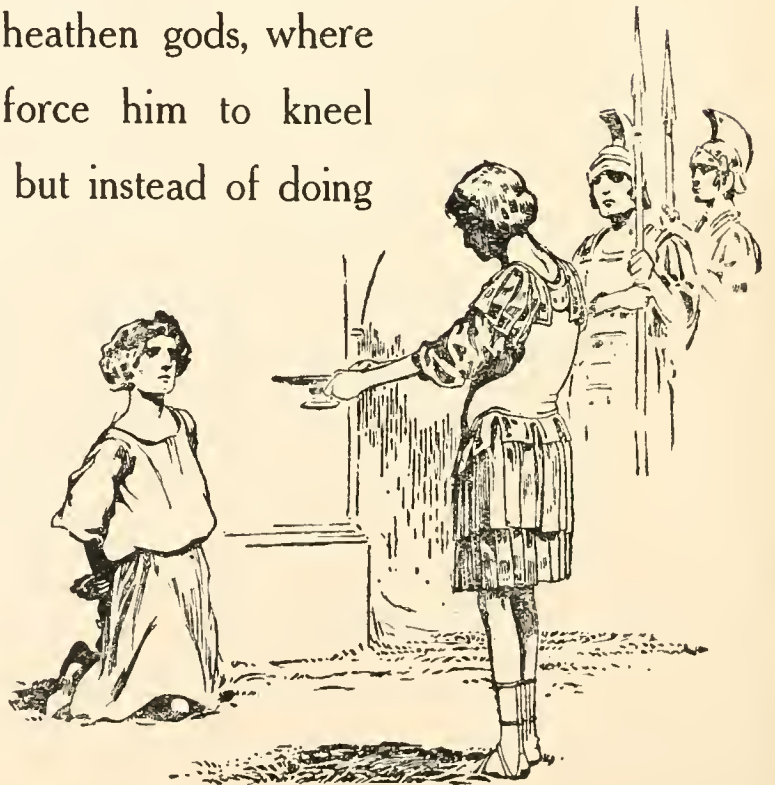
But these offers were of no avail, for St. George remained steadfast to what he knew to



be the only true religion. These means failing to win him to his way of thinking, the Governor is said to have resorted to torture.

There are many tales told of the manner of St. George's death. He is supposed to have been first nailed to a cross, beaten, and even scalded with molten lead! Twice was he compelled to drink poison, but though he suffered greatly, none of these things resulted in his death.

Finally it is said that he was taken to one of the temples of the heathen gods, where soldiers sought to force him to kneel before it in prayer; but instead of doing so, St. George prayed to the true God to send fire from Heaven to destroy the altar of the false god.



Tradition says that fire immediately descended and burned the temple, the gods, and the wicked priests who pretended to believe in these wooden idols, although they knew they were unable to help the ignorant people who prayed to them. For the priests encouraged the people in their idolatry, and extorted large sums of money from them as bribes by pretending to obtain them assistance from the false gods.

And after the fire, there was a great earthquake which destroyed all that the fire had left unburned.

Nevertheless, in spite of all these miracles, the Governor is supposed to have been so angry at the determination of St. George to continue the worship of his own God, that he gave orders for St. George to be beheaded!

But it is related that when this wicked deed

was done and the Governor was returning from witnessing the execution of this brave knight, there fell upon him, fire from Heaven, so that he also perished.

It is certainly true, however, that St. George suffered martyrdom for his religion; and when Constantine became Emperor some years later, and heard all that had befallen this valiant soldier who had once been his friend, he decreed that from that time the soldier should be known as "Saint George, the Champion of the Christian Faith," and his remains were removed to Lydda for burial, as St. George had desired.

Many long years after the death of St. George, when Richard the First was King of England, the Crusaders were fighting in the Holy Land against the Saracens, and our soldiers underwent great hardships and endured much suffering.

Therefore from time to time, becoming disheartened, they suffered defeat at the hands of the enemy. One day when they were fighting before the city of Antioch, it is said that there appeared to the priest who accompanied the Crusaders, a mysterious stranger who spoke to him, telling him that in order to ensure victory for his troops he should carry into the battlefield some sacred relic of St. George.



The next time therefore that the Crusaders marched into battle the priest did this, with the result that the army, inspired by the presence of the sacred relic and the memory of the brave knight, won the battle.

After this the Crusaders never engaged in a fight without exclaiming :

“St. George for England !”

And so it has come about that St. George has been adopted as our patron Saint.

Once, some time afterwards, the Crusaders were attacking Jerusalem, longing to gain possession of the city in order that they might recover the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the heathen.

The fight had been fierce and long, for while the Crusaders were eager to gain possession of Jerusalem, the Saracens were just as determined to prevent them from entering it.

At last, the soldiers of the Cross were compelled to fall back before the fierce onslaughts of the enemy, their ranks became broken and disordered, and finally many of them turned and fled.

Suddenly there is said to have appeared in the midst of the retreating Crusaders a beautiful



A beautiful knight clad in bright shining armour.

knight, clad in bright, shining armour, bearing aloft a white banner upon which was a red cross. He was followed by a band of soldiers and riding before them he led right up towards the walls of the Holy City.

The despairing Crusaders seeing this wonderful vision, took heart, and, rallying themselves together, they turned and followed the knight to the city walls.

Once there, they fought with such determined bravery that they succeeded in overcoming the Saracens, and at length entered the city amidst shouts of exultant rejoicing.

And every soldier who had seen the vision of that resplendent knight, declared it was none other than St. George who had appeared to them and led them on to that most glorious victory.

During the reign of Edward III. the barons were summoned to appear before him, and he declared his intention of instituting an Order, bestowing upon all who were fortunate enough to belong to it, the title of "Knight of St. George." The badge was "The Garter," and each of Edward's barons was made a member.

And so to-day, the greatest honour our king can confer upon anyone is to make him a "Knight of St. George." Even kings are proud to possess the coveted title. And though it does not fall to the lot of many of us to possess this badge, yet we can all determine to secretly dedicate ourselves to the service of this brave and true knight, who, whether he killed the dragon at Silene or not, certainly killed the dragon of cruel Paganism, and so gained freedom for Christians to worship God without fear of persecution. And each time we

see the Red Cross on our English flag we can remember that it is there as an emblem of our desire, as a nation, to protect the helpless, and to suffer ourselves in the cause of Righteousness rather than gain a shameful victory.

So by kindly, helpful deeds, we can endeavour at all times to be worthy followers of that brave St. George, the Patron Saint of England.








They saw a dove hovering above his head.

St. David of Gallant Wales.

t. David of Wales, unlike St. George of England and St. Patrick of Ireland, was really born in the country of which he is the Patron Saint. He was born in Wales, at Mynyw, afterwards called St. David's, about the year A.D. 446. His father's name was Sandde, who was the son of Ceredig, and he was descended from Cunedda, the great conqueror of North Wales, and his mother was a saintly woman named Nôn.

It is said that once when St. Patrick of Ireland visited the vale of Rhos, being charmed with its beauty, he determined to settle there when an angel appeared to him, crying:—



“No, no ; this place is reserved for one who shall be born thirty years from now !”

St. Patrick was disappointed to think that after serving the Church so long and faithfully, an unknown babe was to take

the place he had set his heart upon.

But bidding him look towards Ireland, the whole of which they could see even from where they stood, the angel said :—

“There is your kingdom ; go in peace.”

So Patrick joyfully resigned the preaching of the Gospel in Wales to one who was then unborn.

Thirty years later, when the baby of which the angel spoke was a few weeks old, he was taken

to the bishop to be baptised with the name of David, or Dewi, as the Welsh call him. At his baptism a blind monk is said to have asked to be allowed to hold the baby for a few moments. During the ceremony some of the water in which David was baptised, which the bishop had blessed, was splashed over the sightless eyes of the monk; and he who had never seen the wonders of the world, the beauties of trees and flowers, sky and sea, and the quiet peace of green hills, immediately saw these marvels and was filled with great awe, joy and gratitude.

David grew day by day in strength and



beauty of both mind and body. In appearance he resembled the pictures of the early Britons, having golden-brown hair, clear skin, and a tall, well-made figure.

From the first he was educated to be a priest, and studied the Scriptures with Paulinus in Caermarthenshire. He is also said to have learned to illuminate manuscripts, as did most of the holy monks, writing out the sacred Scriptures in quaint black letters, and painting the margins of the pages in scarlet and gold.

He lived always most simply. At one time of his life he resided in the vale of Ewias, where he built a chapel on the site now occupied by Llanthony Abbey, the river Honddu furnished him with all the drink he required, and the meadow-leek sufficed for his food.

Even as a young boy at school at Henmenen he was of gentle, saintly behaviour, and his school friends declared that when he used to sit out of doors with his book, they saw a dove hovering above his head, teaching him, and singing hymns.

His teacher, Paulinus, suffered from great pain in his eyes, for which he could find no relief. One day he called David to him and asked him to look at them, and see if he could do anything to ease the pain.

But David replied humbly :

“My master, all these years I have never raised my eyes to yours !”

Paulinus smiled gently at his humility, and said :

“Do not look at me then, but rest your hands upon my aching eyes and bless them.”



At David's loving touch of sympathy, followed by his earnest prayers, Paulinus found immediate relief, and when David removed his hand, the dimmed sight became clear and his master was quite free from pain.

At last the day arrived when David bade Paulinus farewell, and set off on a journey before settling down in Wales.

He first stayed at Glastonbury where he added a Lady Chapel at the east end of the church there.

Then he is said to have travelled to a place which, though in the midst of lovely surroundings, consisted for the most part of deserted houses, with here and there a few inhabited huts. The land was neglected and everything spoke of distress and misery.

On enquiring the reason David learned that the spring of water that came bubbling up from the ground, and which the people and their cattle had depended upon for drinking purposes, had become brackish and poisonous.

The cattle, sheep and horses died, and most of the people sought out other places to settle in.

Upon hearing this David went to the chief spring, and raising his hands, blessed the water, commanding it to come up, not only clear and pure, but also hot "until the day of judgment."



The people called the place Hot Baths, but we now call it Bath.

During his travels after leaving Paulinus, David is said to have founded no fewer than twelve monasteries.

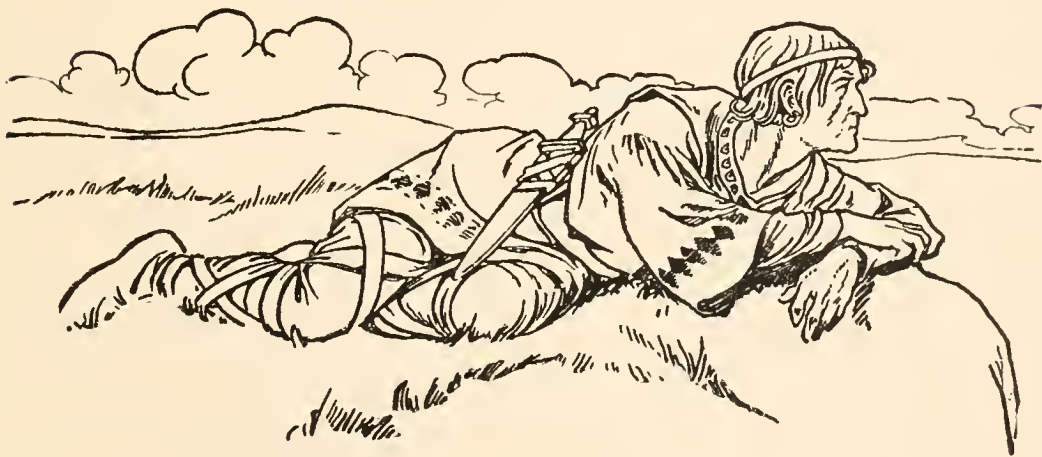
On returning to his native country he arrived at Glyn Rosyn which, with

the surrounding country, belonged to a Prince called Boya, and David, finding it a very lovely vale, longed to settle there.

In that wild glen there was no house or

hut to be seen, so David and his followers gathered sticks and set about making a fire in the open. The fire was a large one, and the volume of smoke rose in thick clouds which were carried by the wind all along the coast as far as the eye could reach.

Now it is said that Prince Boya saw this smoke and flinging himself down upon the cliff he lay watching it with troubled eyes ; remaining there without eating or drinking until his wife came to ask what it was that thus disturbed his peace of mind.



“I am sorrowful and angry” he replied, “because of yonder smoke. It has not cleared away since the fire was lit, but has surrounded many cities. The man who lit the fire shall have power over all the land upon which the smoke rests.”

“How foolish you are!” exclaimed his wife, “If you fear that, why not call together your soldiers and kill this stranger who has dared to trespass on your land, lighting his fire thereon?”

Prince Boya determined to act upon this suggestion, and he and his soldiers set boldly out to punish this rash adventurer.

But the nearer they approached the place where the fire burned brightly, the less bold and brave they felt. They could not say what it was they feared, but they certainly felt horribly afraid of something or other.

On coming in sight of David and his followers, their knees trembled, and their hands shook so greatly they were quite unable to draw their swords.

In fact, they could do nothing but stand there, like foolish, quarrelsome schoolboys, too frightened to fight, and reduced to calling out insulting remarks, just as schoolboys sometimes do.

They called David a “beggar” and a “thief.” They accused him of stealing land and firewood,



and finally, without waiting for a reply, they turned round and fled homeward like frightened rabbits.

Before they reached the castle, however, Prince Boya's wife came running to meet them, calling out in great distress that all their cows and



oxen, horses and sheep, were dead! Not a single animal remained to them.

Then Prince Boya cried:

“This holy man whom we have mocked hath done this thing. Alas! what can we do?”

Thereupon one of his wise men advised that they should return to David, and ask his pardon and implore his help.

This advice Boya and his wife at once acted upon, and they asked David to be merciful to them, at the same time offering him Glyn Rosyn and the surrounding land as a gift for ever.

Thus they obtained David's pardon and ready promise of aid, and when they again reached the castle they found every animal restored to life once more!

But Prince Boya and his wife never really forgave David for settling in Glyn Rosyn; although David did nothing but good to their people, helping the sick and sorrowful, and preaching and teaching the Gospel to those who would hear it. Because of their enmity, therefore, David never attempted

to build a house for himself, being content with a hut made of the boughs of trees.

Neither the Prince nor his wife listened to David's preaching, and the latter did all she could to annoy him. But, to her intense disgust, her young step-daughter often went to hear his sermons. At last the wicked woman's anger at this grew so great that she enticed the young girl into the woods on the pretence of gathering nuts, and she is said to have cruelly put her to death there. Where the innocent victim's blood touched the ground, a fountain of clear water is supposed to have sprung up, which afterwards healed many people of their sicknesses; but from that time the wife of Boya was never seen again.

Soon after this Boya determined to put David to death, and carefully made his plans. But very early in the morning of the day after his

arrangements were completed, before Boya was awake, one of his enemies entered the castle and killed him whilst he slept, and immediately after, people declared that fire came down from heaven and burned the castle to the ground. Thus Prince Boya and his family came to a tragic end because of their behaviour to the holy priest who had settled in their land, whilst David, having nothing further to fear from the Prince, decided to establish a monastery, which was soon filled with monks and disciples.

They themselves worked hard at the building of it, and also in the fields, drawing the ploughs instead of using oxen; and David worked with them, doing more than any other monk. They also found time to look after the sick and the poor, the widows and the orphans.

Some of the monks undertook the care of bees, so that they might have honey to give away, and it is said that these little creatures became so attached to one named Modemnoc that once, when he was sailing for Ireland, great numbers followed him on board the ship, refusing to leave him though he made several attempts to embark unobserved by his winged friends. Finally he asked David to give him permission to take the bees with him, and David readily consented and blessed them, so they



departed with the monk, and thus Ireland was enriched by bees which, up to then, had been unable to live on the island.



She enticed the young girl into the woods.

If David ever found himself feeling weary of his hard life, he would punish himself by standing up to his neck in the ice-cold water of a lake on the hills, even doing this in winter, and he is said to have once stayed so long that the ice joined all round him.

A monk named Aidan, who was the head of a monastery in Ireland, and a great friend of David's, was praying in his church on the eve of one Easter Sunday, when, in a circle of light he saw an angel's face, and the angel warned him that three men—a deacon, a steward, and a cook in David's monastery—were all plotting against David, and had



determined to poison the bread he would eat the following day.

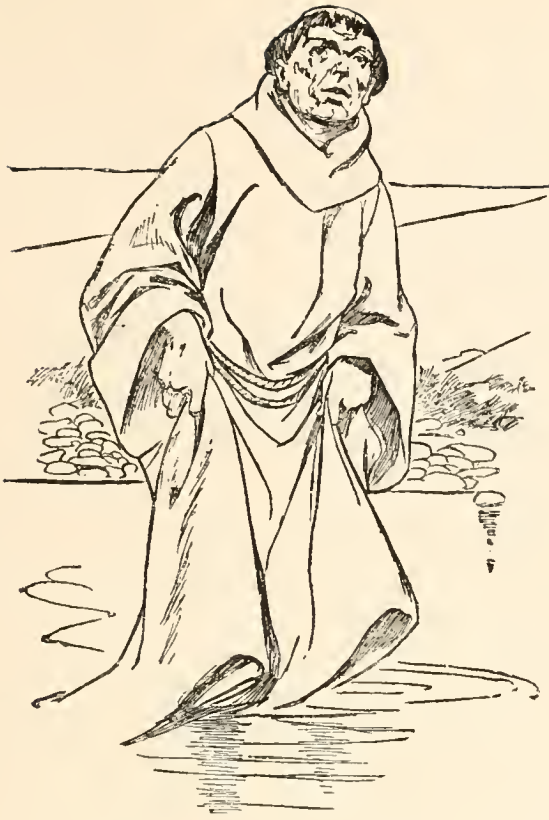
“Alas! what shall I do?” cried Aidan; “No ship, even if there were one, could take me over to Wales in time to save him! Oh, my master, my master!”

Then the angel said:

“Send thy disciple, Scutinus, to the shore; I will direct him.”

On arriving there Scutinus, seeing no other way of reaching Wales, walked straight into the sea, willing to leave the means of getting there to the angel who had warned Aidan of David's danger. As he waded far out, a hideous monster suddenly appeared immediately in front of him.

He was at first very alarmed, but finally laid hold of its huge fin and scrambled on to its back, when it at once shook Scutinus into the hollow



near the fin, and there he sat as comfortably as though in an arm-chair. All night they travelled across the sea, and early next morning saw the green hills of Wales. The monster made for the spot upon which David's monastery stood. On reaching shallow water Scutinus dismounted, and kissing his quaint escort affectionately on the nose, he waded ashore. On looking back the sea was gleaming in the morning sun, but there was no sign of the monster to be seen anywhere.

Scutinus arrived at the monastery just as all the monks, with David at their head, were about to break their fast.

After his joyful greeting of Scutinus, David was greatly grieved to hear the reason of his unexpected visit. His eyes filled with tears at the thought of the treachery of his supposed followers.

However, nothing was said to any of the monks, and David and Scutinus followed them into the dining hall. When all were seated at table (Scutinus, as the guest, by David's side), the wicked deacon brought in the poisoned bread, placing it in front of David. Before anyone could take any, Scutinus hastily jumped up and took the platter, saying :

“I myself will wait upon the fathers to-day.”

As the disciple kneeling before David offered him the platter, the deacon, troubled by his guilty conscience, staggered from the room overcome with fear. Silently David took a piece of bread and



All night they travelled across the sea.



broke it into three ; then, after a pause, he bade Scutinus give one piece to a dog that stood within the door. No sooner had the dog taken a mouthful than it fell dead.

Still in silence, David took up the second piece, and after a few moments of thought

bade Scutinus give that to a crow that was perched upon the bough of an ash tree just outside the open door. In wondering silence the monks watched Scutinus obey David, and saw to their further amazement, the crow fall dead immediately after eating the bread.

Again, in silence, David took the third piece and looked thoughtfully at it whilst the monks

commenced to murmur amongst themselves at these strange doings.

Then David slowly rose from his seat and blessed the bread, and telling the monks to watch him closely, he ate it as they watched him, believing that with his blessing the poison would lose its power, which is exactly what happened. The bread became wholesome at once, so David was unharmed by it. But the monks, learning of the plot against their beloved master, cursed the



wretched men who had plotted to kill him, and turned them away from the monastery; and, being cursed by the holy men, no one would speak to them or have anything whatever to do with them.

David is supposed by some writers to have visited Jerusalem at one time of his life, and to have received consecration at the hands of the Patriarch, John III. This idea probably arose from a desire of some British monk to trace the succession of the Welsh bishops back to the oldest of the Patriarchates.

He is said, on his journey there, to have gone first to France, where he and his companions were greatly confused by the strange language they heard all round them.

But when David timidly attempted to make known their wants in the ancient British tongue he

found himself speaking French quite easily.

They are then said to have travelled forward to Jerusalem, where they were received with kindness by the Patriarch, the head of the Christian Church. When they



left Palestine he gave them some wonderful presents which, however, they could not carry away, one of them being a consecrated altar.

Nevertheless he promised to send the gifts after them, and soon after their return home each man found his special gift in the monastery, and they were said to have been brought over by angels.

David continued to live the same austere life, even after he was promoted to high office. Water was his only drink, and he never ate the

flesh of animals. All his time was given up to prayer and study, and the teaching of his followers.

Like many abbots of these days he was promoted to the office of "Bishop," but he always avoided political and worldly concerns, living a very retired life.

About the year 517 A.D., there was a great meeting together of monks and bishops, called the Synod of Brefi, which met to consider the teachings of a certain monk called Pelagius. The other teachers did not agree with his doctrines, and called it heresy ; that is, teaching opposed to that taught in the Christian Church.

David, however, did not attend the Synod which was formed of bishops, abbots, princes and laymen. Many of these spoke with great fervour and earnestness, trying to convince the followers of Pelagius of their errors, but all their preaching

seemed ineffectual. At last Bishop Paulinus, David's old master, earnestly begged that David should be sent for because he was holy, discreet and eloquent.

A messenger was despatched in haste, but David declined to leave his own work and prayerful meditations, saying :

“How can I do anything, when so many good men have failed?”



Finally two holy men went to him and declined to take any food until David promised to return with them to the waiting people; so, reluctantly he con-

sented to attend the Synod, and set out with them.

On his way he is said to have stopped to comfort a woman whom he found weeping bitterly over the death of her boy. David was so overcome by her entreaties for help that, weeping himself as he stood and looked upon her dead son, he at last knelt by his side, and prayed earnestly that he might be restored to life.

As he prayed, the colour crept back into the boy's cheeks, and he opened his eyes and smiled at his mother. She was so grateful when



she saw her son rise up in health and strength that she insisted upon him accompanying David to serve and wait upon him.

When David reached the assembly, though other preachers had been unable to make themselves heard by the vast crowd, his voice rang out like a silver trumpet, clear and distinct, and his grace and eloquence were such that his opponents were silenced and utterly vanquished.

It is declared that a snow-white dove came from heaven as he spoke and sat on his shoulder ; whilst the ground on which he stood rose up under him so that he was seen and heard by everyone in that immense gathering.

After this, by unanimous consent of clergy and laity, he was elected Primate of the Cambrian Church. At first he declined the honour, but finally accepted it on condition that he made his



At last the colour crept back into the boy's cheeks.

beloved Glyn Rosyn the centre of his work, rather than the busy city of Caerleon. Probably he feared the rapid advances of the heathen English into Wales, and felt it would be safer to be established on the iron-bound shores of Pembroke, dreading lest the seat of the primacy should fall into the hands of the invaders.

It is said that when David was growing old he was permitted to ask a favour from heaven, whereupon he prayed :

“Let me come to Thee, O Lord!”

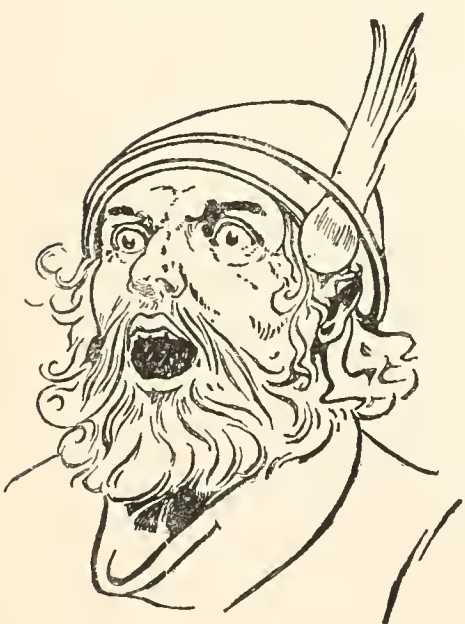
Therefore he was told by an angel that he should die the following First of March, and the Sunday before that date, as he finished preaching he was seized with illness, and turning to his people he cried :

“Brethren, continue in the things which ye have learned of me !”

And a day or two later, on the First of March, at an advanced age this great and good bishop died.

He was canonized later by Pope Gallixtus, who is said to have granted an indulgence to those who made a pilgrimage to David's shrine, and three English kings, William the Conqueror, Henry III., and Edward I., are said to have done this.

As David once advised a Welsh king who had come to seek help from him during a war between the Britons and Saxons, to make his soldiers wear a leek in order to become strong, and



also by this means to distinguish their friends from their enemies, the leek is considered sacred to him, as the rose is to St. George, and the shamrock to St. Patrick, for of course the wearers of the leek won the battle. Therefore

a leek is worn on March the First, St. David's Day, by patriotic Welshmen.

A noble English matron, Elswida, in the reign of Edgar, transferred St. David's remains to Glastonbury from St. David's, about the year A.D. 964; and so in the choir of St. David's Cathedral, to the north of Edward Tudor's altar-tomb, there stands the plain, but empty, shrine of St. David.

Though it is possible that there may be many stories told of St. David which have no foundation, still there is no doubt that he lived a most noble, self-sacrificing life, and is indeed a most worthy Patron Saint of Wales.





At this the disciples crouched in the bottom of the boat.

St. Andrew of Bonny Scotland.



St. Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland, was neither born there, nor did he ever live there. He was the Andrew you read about in the Bible, and was one of St. John the Baptist's followers, but hearing St. John twice speak of Christ as the "Lamb of God," he became interested in this preacher from Nazareth, and finally became one of his first disciples.

There is an interesting Life of St. Andrew written in Anglo-Saxon, in which are many curious legends about the saint, mixed up with authentic history, from which the following incidents are taken.

Amongst many things said of St. Andrew, one is that he was the means of the foundation of the

Church of Byzantium, and he is supposed to have travelled through many places and cities during his lifetime before settling down in Achaia.

After the crucifixion, when the disciples were left together discussing their plans for the future, it was decided that each man should take some particular district in which he should preach the Gospel, and teach people about their beloved Master and His wonderful power and love.

In order to decide where they should go they drew lots, and to Andrew fell Achaia; whilst his brother Matthew discovered that a place named Marmadonia had fallen to him.

Now the people of Marmadonia were horribly cruel and fierce, and Matthew was somewhat dismayed at the thought of endeavouring to teach such people anything about the gentle, loving, merciful Christ. However he exclaimed:



“It matters not where I die, so long as I do those things that I ought to do.”

The Marmadonians were quite uncivilised, and above all they were cannibals, not only killing their enemies, but eating their flesh afterwards.

Strangers visiting their city were horribly treated. They were immediately imprisoned, and afterwards

blinded. Then they were compelled to drink some drug which deprived them of their reason, and were kept in confinement for some time, during which they were well fed, for later on they were killed and eaten.



Now although Matthew knew this, he set off very bravely on his journey and marched boldly into Marmadonia.

The thing he expected happened at once. No sooner did the people see a stranger enter the

gates of their city than he was set upon by soldiers, who at once hurried him off to prison.

Then followed the horrible treatment that all unfortunate prisoners received at their hands. Matthew was bound and blinded, but when they tried to force him to drink the drug that would deprive him of his reason he absolutely refused to do so ; so at last, telling him his refusal would but increase his suffering, they left him alone for a time.

The reason Matthew declined the drug was that he might still be able to pray, and as soon as his gaolers left him alone he knelt and cried to God to have pity upon him, and to restore his sight and not leave him to die a dreadful death amongst these savages.



For Matthew knew that Christ had healed all who were ill and maimed and blind when he was on earth, and he knew too that His being in heaven did not prevent Him from still healing those who really believed in His power and love.

As Matthew prayed a bright light suddenly shone around him, and a voice said :

“Be not afraid, Matthew, I will never forsake thee. For twenty-seven nights thou shalt remain here, and then Andrew shall come to deliver thee.”

Now Matthew, blinded though he was, had seen the light quite plainly, and when it faded away he found that his sight was restored.

It happened about this time that Andrew had had a hard day of preaching and teaching at Achaia, and when he was alone in his room at night he fell asleep. As he slept he heard a voice saying :



“Andrew, arise and hasten to Marmadonia; otherwise in three days from now Matthew shall be killed and his flesh eaten.”

But Andrew shrank in fear from the thought of visiting such a terrible people, and he said tremblingly :

“How is it possible to reach there in three days? It would be better that an angel were sent, for I am only a man of flesh and blood, and cannot do this thing, as I know not the way thither.”

But again the voice spoke, saying:

“I have arranged this journey, Andrew, so arise and go to the sea-shore with thy disciples, and take the boat that thou wilt see there.”

Then Andrew awoke, and knew he had been commanded by the Lord to hasten to Matthew, and he called his disciples, and they hurried to the sea-shore, where they found a boat in which three men were sitting.

When Andrew saw the boat, he cried:—

“Brethren, whither are you bound in your boat?”

And one of the men replied:—

“To Marmadonia!”

“I pray you take us with you,” said Andrew.



“But why should you wish that?” asked the man, “since everyone flies from that dreadful city.”

“Our need is pressing,” replied Andrew, “therefore I beg of you to take us.”

“Then give us money for the passage, and we will carry you thither,” replied the captain.

“We carry no money,” Andrew answered, “for we are disciples of Christ, whom He commanded to go forth and preach, taking no money for our needs.”

“If that is so,” replied the captain, “hasten into the boat, and we will set out upon the journey.”

As soon as Andrew and his disciples had embarked, the men bent to their oars and the boat flew swiftly through the water.

Then suddenly black clouds gathered, and the wind rose and howled loudly, lashing the water into

high waves as a great storm broke over them. At this the disciples crouched in the bottom of the boat in fear of the raging waves, seeing which the captain told Andrew to ask them if they wished to be put ashore, leaving him to continue the journey alone.

Thereupon the disciples replied :

“If we desert Andrew when he is in danger, then may God take away from us all good things. Whither he goes we will also go.”

Then Andrew turned to his followers and spoke of the storm in which Christ and his disciples had been, and told how Christ had stilled the tempest. And as he spoke to them of Jesus and His wonderful love and power, they gently fell into a deep slumber, and soon Andrew, leaning his head upon the shoulder of one of them, also fell asleep.

Then the captain bade his men carry them ashore and leave them before the gates of the city of Marmadonia, and when he had finished speaking he vanished from sight.

When Andrew awoke he found himself close to a high wall, and a little way off was the city gate, which he knew was that of Marmadonia, and he roused his followers and said :

“Brethren, arise and praise the Lord, for He it was who brought us in the night, and we knew Him not.”

Then Andrew knelt and prayed, saying :

“Dear Lord, I knew Thee not. I spake to Thee in the boat as to a man ; I pray Thee appear to us yet once again.”

And as he ceased speaking, One who was beautiful to look upon appeared before them, and they knew it was Christ their Lord.

Then the vision spoke and said :

“Though thou saidst to Me that it was not possible to reach this city in three days, behold, Andrew, I have brought thee here. Now enter the gates and free Matthew and the other captives from the prison and send them eastward to Peter. But the Marmadonians shall take thee, and thou shalt suffer many things, and thy blood shall flow in their streets, yet thou shalt not die. Remember how I suffered to teach thee how to endure. If thou art strong even these savage people shall be overcome and brought to know My ways.”

Then the vision faded and Andrew, filled with a great courage, entered the city, and at once hurried, unobserved, to the prison door. Here he prayed that the eyes of the guards might be closed so that they did not see him, and immediately the guards fell senseless to the ground.



Then Andrew made the sign of a cross upon the prison door and it slowly swung wide open, and he and his followers entered the great and gloomy prison, and as they eagerly hurried forward they heard the voice of Matthew, singing hymns

of praise in a happy voice.

As he sang he heard the sound of approaching feet and he closed his eyes, thinking it was his captors, for he did not wish them to realise that his sight had been restored; but Andrew hurried to him and touching him on the shoulder cried:



“Matthew! Matthew! arise and flee from this place before they come and slay thee.”

At the sound of Andrew’s voice Matthew rose up and flung his arms round his neck saying:

“Lo! Christ said thou shouldst come and free me, and so I waited without fear.”

Then Andrew and Matthew hurried from cell to cell, setting free all the captives, and Andrew

placed his hands upon their eyes and their sight was given back to them. Then he prayed, and gently touched each one upon the heart, and their reason, that had been destroyed by the drug, was restored, and each man became quite sane again.

Then Andrew bade them all go towards the East, where Peter dwelt, saying he would follow them later. But they cried :—

“Come with us also, lest without thee to guide us we are caught again ; or, worse still, lest the savage cannibals catch and slay thee.”

But Andrew replied :—

“Go forth in peace ; no one shall harm or trouble you.”

Then softly that great company passed out of the prison, and hurried through the city ; and though many of the inhabitants heard the sound of feet hurrying by, no one could see them as they went,

and the people wondered greatly what this sound of tramping feet could mean.

Thus Matthew and his fellow-prisoners escaped, but Andrew remained behind in that dreadful city. Though he feared the trial that he was to pass through, yet he rejoiced that he could obey his Lord.

Now when the time came for the soldiers to fetch Matthew, they went to the prison to bring him forth with other captives to be put to death, for the king commanded that a certain number of people should be killed daily for his food.

Great was their anger and dismay when they found all the prisoners escaped and the prison doors wide open, the guards lying dead before them.

They rushed out into the streets, crying—

“Who has done this? Who has done this?”



“Here am I, Andrew, whom you seek.”

At that moment a youth, unknown to all, who was indeed an evil spirit in the form of a man, shouted to the soldiers:—

“Search for one called Andrew, and kill him, for he it is who has done this thing.”

Then Andrew, whom no one could see, cried out:—

“Thou evil one! that fightest ever against goodness.”

At the sound of his voice the people and soldiers grew more angry and also frightened. They shut the city gates and commenced to search for this Andrew of whom the youth had spoken.

Then all fear fell from the disciple and he called aloud:

“Here am I, Andrew, whom you seek!”



And immediately he became visible to the eyes of all the people. Then the soldiers seized him and bound him, and they discussed fiercely amongst themselves how they should put him to death.

And as they spoke together, the evil spirit in the form of the youth, cried to them yet again, saying :

“Tie round his body a rope and drag him forth over the stones of the city till he dies.”

And the evil thought took possession of the minds of the savage people, and they dragged Andrew along the rough streets till his blood stained the stones thereof.

Yet at evening he was not dead, so the soldiers cast him into prison, with his hands bound behind him, and his poor crushed and bruised body lay on the floor of the cell till morning.

But even then the evil thoughts of these savage people were not satisfied, and they tortured him still further, but Andrew cried to Christ to give him courage and strength to endure.

On the second night the youth led the people into Andrew's prison, urging them to kill him, but when they saw he was still alive, they began to



fear him, knowing Christ was with him, for all the time they ill-treated Andrew he never ceased from trying to teach them of Christ. When the governor heard this, it made him very angry to think Andrew should obey his Lord by preaching to the people, when he declined to obey him by denying Christ, saying :—

“Kill me if you wish, yet I will not deny my Lord, nor call to you for mercy.”

So Andrew was tormented still further, but he cried to Christ to comfort and strengthen him, and as he prayed a voice said—

“Look up, Andrew, and see what has become of thy blood.”

And Andrew saw a strange and beautiful tree full of lovely blossom, and he knew by that, that Christ had not forsaken him.

That night, in his cold, comfortless prison, as he



Therefore he turned from those who were gathered round him.

suffered great pain in his mangled and bruised body, a voice spoke to him, saying :—

“Come, Andrew !”

And Andrew struggled painfully on to his knees, and at once his broken limbs and bruised skin became well and whole, and a great peace and comfort stole over him ; and there was no mark upon him as, without any pain, he rose to his feet.

Then he wandered forth from the prison wondering how he should punish these fierce and savage people. For he felt that they deserved punishment for their wicked cruelty both to



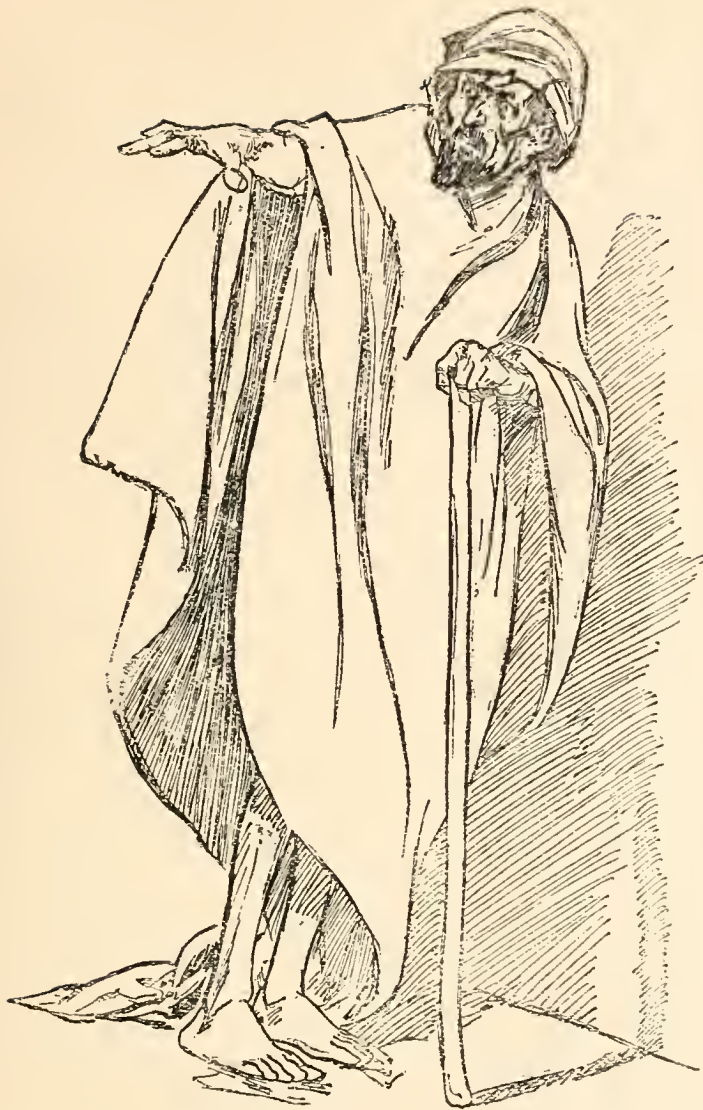
him and to the helpless people they had so often tortured.

As he reached the empty courtyard of the prison, he saw a great statue upon a high column, and standing before this statue, he commanded it to spout forth water from its mouth, to overflow the city. And immediately a great stream of water gushed forth.

When the people beheld this stream rushing down the streets they thought at first some waterway had burst, but as the flow of water grew deeper and deeper and more rapid, they grew frightened, and they rushed towards the hills to escape from it.

Then Andrew called down fire, and at once a cloud of flames sprang up on the hill side, so that the people were between flood and flame.

And one of the wisest cried:—



“It is because of the stranger whom we tormented, and whose preaching we would not listen to. Let us call to him, and believe in his God.”

So some of the people turned in their flight and managed to struggle back to Andrew, and when he saw this he commanded the water to cease to flow. Then he walked towards them, and as he went there was a dry place made for him, whilst all round the water danced and sparkled at his feet

Then Andrew raised his hands and commanded the waters to disappear, and the earth opened and the water rushed into the abyss, carrying with it numbers of dead bodies, the people seeing which cried—

“Woe to us! God will kill us also for the harm we have done His servant!”

Then Andrew said:—

“Fear not! They shall live again!”



At these words those that were drowned were restored to life, and came up from the abyss, and gathered round Andrew to listen to his teaching about the true God, and from that moment many believed in Him, because of all they had seen.

Now although Andrew caused the water to cease to flow and saved the people, he felt anger in his heart against them, and determined to leave Marmadonia and set forth to join Matthew.

Therefore he turned from those who were gathered round him and walked towards the city-gates, and the people seeing this, followed after him, begging him not to leave them but to remain amongst them for a little while and teach them about God. But Andrew hardened his heart and refused their request. Then the Marmadonians, weeping, returned to their homes feeling that they would never hear again of the wonderful God

who had been able to save His disciple and perform such wonders.

As Andrew continued on his way a bright light flashed upon him, and he heard a voice asking why he had left the city before his work was done, and bidding him return and preach there seven days.



Andrew realised that this was God's command to him, and he at once returned and taught the people, and shewed them how

to set about building a church, so that when he set forth to join Matthew a week later he left

many believers behind in the city of Marmadonia to continue preaching the Gospel.

There are many other stories told of the miracles Andrew performed. One of them tells of some forty people who, having heard of Andrew, set sail in a ship to see him and listen to his preaching. As they neared land a storm rose and the boat was wrecked, and the people drowned. As the bodies were washed ashore, some fishermen were drawing them sadly to land, when Andrew appeared and touching each body restored it to life.



Though Andrew built many churches and taught great numbers of people, and performed many miracles, yet the governor of Achaia, Ægeas, would never listen to him, and declined to believe in the teaching of Christ, calling it superstition, the author of which the Jews had put to death on a cross.

He also declared that the people might believe what they liked, but unless Andrew sacrificed to the gods in the heathen temple he should himself suffer on a cross of which he talked so often.

Andrew declined to enter the temple, so orders were given that he should be thrown into prison, at which the people were very angry indeed, and would have broken out into rebellion, but Andrew sent word to them to keep patient even as Christ had done.

Then, when he still refused to obey Ægeas,



A monk was told in a vision to take Andrew's bones on board a certain ship.

sentence of death was passed upon him. First of all seven lictors flogged his naked body, and Ægeas seeing that Andrew was still gentle and forgiving, grew more angry, and commanded him to be fastened to a cross in the shape of a letter X. He was not nailed to it, but fastened with ropes so that death might be more painful and lingering.



Nevertheless, all the while Andrew hung there he continued to preach to the people, until they believed in great numbers, and grew angry with Ægeas, demanding that Andrew should be released. But Andrew knowing this, prayed God to let him

die on the cross even as Christ had died, and, as he prayed, a great light shone upon him and his weary spirit was set free, and so Andrew died upon the cross as he wished to do.

It is said that three hundred years later a monk living in Patras in Achaia, called Regulus, who was the guardian of Andrew's shrine, was told in a vision to take his bones on board a certain ship. And immediately he did so, without any guidance, the great ship sailed away through the Mediterranean Sea, the Bay of Biscay, and up the English Channel, stopping at last on the south-east shore of Scotland.

And at the place where it stopped the monk left the ship and buried the bones of the Saint, and he himself settled there, preaching to the Picts and Scots. Later he was made a bishop, the first bishop of the See of St. Andrew's, as the place is called to this day.

Whether all we read about Andrew is exactly what happened or not, one thing is certain, and that is that he lived bravely, and died the death of a martyr, so that heathen savages might learn of Christ. And he is by no means the least of the patron Saints of Great Britain. His death took place on November the Thirtieth, and that day is kept in Scotland as St. Andrew's Day.







And Patrick was among several youths that he carried away as prisoners.

St. Patrick of the Emerald Isle.



aint Patrick of Ireland, like St. George of England, was not born in the country of which he is the patron saint:

Whilst some historians maintain that he was the son of a Roman soldier, and was born in Cumberland, others infer that France was his birth-place, as the name of Britain was once applied to the North of France as well as to England.

In his confessions, St. Patrick says:

“My father was Calpurnius, a deacon, son of Potitus, a priest of the town of Bonavem.”

And Bonavem is said to be the present town of Boulogne-sur-mer.

But wherever he was born, he was a good



and brave saint, and the stories told about him are full of interest.

Patrick and his little sister used to look after the sheep belonging to Calpurnius, their father, and one lovely day in

spring, as his sister was running across the fields her foot slipped and she fell, striking her forehead upon a sharp stone.

Her mother and Patrick ran to her assistance, and found her lying white and senseless, with blood flowing from a deep cut on her forehead. Patrick stooped down and made the sign of the Cross over the wound, and the little girl is said to have opened her eyes immediately, and risen from the ground as though nothing had happened.

Her mother, wishing to stop the bleeding from the cut, at once held a linen cloth to it, but on removing this, to her surprise she found there was neither cut nor bruise to shew where the stone had struck her little daughter!

Another day when Patrick was watching the sheep, a wolf crept softly from the forest at the edge of which they were grazing, and, unnoticed by Patrick, seized a poor little lamb in its jaws and ran off into the woods again.

When the lambs were counted and one was found to be missing, Patrick received a good scolding. Being greatly distressed at his carelessness, he at once prayed



to God, expressing his repentance and asking for help.

The next morning, upon reaching the field with his sheep, it is said that the first thing he saw was the wolf, creeping through the hedge with the lamb in its jaws, which it laid at the feet of Patrick quite unhurt!

Another story tells how one cold day in winter he went out to play, and when he returned home he had his arms full of blocks of ice.

“Dear, dear,” said his nurse, “I wish instead of bringing that useless stuff, you had brought wood for the fire!”

“But it is quite easy for God to make fire out of ice,” said Patrick gravely:

Then he placed the ice-blocks upon the empty hearth, and kneeling down prayed, afterwards breathing upon the ice, and immediately



long tongues of flame are said to have burst from the ice-blocks, and very soon there was a bright fire blazing merrily which warmed all those who entered the room!

The people of those far off days were very wild and uncivilised. Bands of robbers and marauders were constantly swooping down upon farms and villages, carrying off cattle and goods, and even youths and women to sell as slaves.

Patrick's nurse is said to have been taken prisoner, and given heavy tasks to do, quite unfitted



for a woman. She was expected to keep clean the stables in the fort to which she was taken, and no one dared to help her. But Patrick is said to have offered up prayers on her behalf, whereupon the stables became quite clean, and no dirt is supposed to remain within that fort to this day.

When Patrick was about sixteen years old, Nial of the Nine Hostages, an Irish King, was

plundering both the coasts of Great Britain and Gaul, as France was then called. He landed at Bonona in A.D. 403, and Patrick was amongst several youths that he carried away as prisoners. On being brought to Ireland he became the slave or servant of a man named Milcho, who lived in what is now known as the county of Antrim.

Writing later about this, Patrick, who was truly a great saint, says with much humility that as a boy he was like most boys, careless about religion, but after he was carried captive into Ireland, and suffered the miseries of slavery, God taught him through his suffering to believe in Him and His wonderful power.

One of his duties as Milcho's servant was to look after the sheep on the wild, desolate bogland of Ireland. And in snow and frost, bitter wind and driving rain, he rose before daylight, and

always began the day with prayer. He says in his letters that during the six years he was in Milcho's service he praised God always, praying often a hundred times a day!

One night, as he slept, he heard a voice saying:

“Thou prayest well, thou shalt soon return to thy country.”

Presently the voice cried to him again saying:

“Behold, a ship is ready for thee.”

Then he arose, and learning that the ship was far off on the coast, he set off in the blackness of the night, and fled from Milcho's country to seek it.

“And by God's power,” says Patrick, “I came to a good end and had no fear until I reached the ship, whereupon I asked for a passage.”

This the captain was disinclined to give to one who was evidently a runaway slave, for Patrick adds :

“The master of the vessel angrily bade me not think of going with him. On hearing this I retired to a hut at which I had been received and lodged, and on my way thither I prayed. But before I had finished my prayer I heard one of the men shouting after me.”

Patrick looked back and a sailor leaning over the side of the vessel called to him :



“Come! the men here wish for thee. Come, we will take thee on trust; we are about to sail and hope to reach land in three days.”

Three days later they reached the coast of France, all landing in Brittany, where the master of the vessel hoped to dispose of his merchandise.

For twenty-eight days they wandered through a country laid desolate and in ruins owing to the ravages of the Franks, who frequently plundered the farms and villages. And at length they fell short of food and almost perished from hunger.

Then the ship's master exclaimed to Patrick :
“Christian! thy God is powerful. Pray for us, for we are starving.”

The sailors and owner of the vessel were heathens, worshipping idols, but they had often heard Patrick speak of the power of God.

So Patrick desired them to turn in faith to his

Lord and believe in His great mercy and power, and then he prayed, and suddenly a noise of breaking twigs was heard and a drove of swine came crashing through the bushes across the path where Patrick knelt.

The sailors chased the swine, killing sufficient for their needs. Then they gave thanks to Patrick's God, and being thus provided with food, they decided to remain in that place for two days to rest from their long and wearying journey.

At length after long absence, Patrick reached his home once more, and his parents and friends were overjoyed to see him again. He was then twenty-two years of age, and determined to visit Tours, where he studied diligently for four years.

Later on he again suffered captivity, but in spite of all Patrick had gone through, and in spite too of the pleadings of his friends and relatives,

who urged him to remain peaceably with them in restful comfort after all he had suffered, Patrick, owing to a vision, determined to leave his native land.

One night he saw a figure who came towards him offering him a letter, and the only words that Patrick could see were these :

“The voice of the Irish.”

Then suddenly he beheld a great lonely forest in Ireland, from the midst of which he heard the cry of many people lost in its gloomy depths, and they cried to him saying :



“We entreat thee, O holy boy, come and walk in the midst of us to guide us!”

And Patrick awoke, feeling greatly troubled for the people of Ireland; for he knew them to be heathens, without knowledge of the merciful and powerful God.

To prepare himself for this mission work, Patrick placed himself under the tuition of St. Germain, and after learning all he could from him he gave himself up to a long period of holy meditation. Therefore, when some time later St. Germain sent Patrick to Rome, recommending him to the notice of the Pope, Celestine, who was anxious to send teachers to the Irish, gave Patrick his holy blessing, and he set out for Ireland, accompanied by many followers eager to help him in his great work.

Many legends are told about his journey



from Rome to Ireland; one of which says that his ship called at an island in the Mediterranean Sea, where Patrick noticed that some of the strong and stalwart young men were addressed as “father” by men who were old and grey-headed.

Patrick felt very curious as to the reason, but he did not like to ask questions about things

that did not concern him.

After he had been entertained to supper, the young man who was sitting at the head of the table, whom several older men called "father," turned to Patrick, asking if he



did not think this very strange. Patrick, of course, replied that he did think so, whereupon the young man told him the following story :

“Once, many years ago, there came a pilgrim to our island, and, as is our custom, we showed him hospitality and made him welcome amongst us. In the morning he made ready to depart, but before leaving he told us he was the Lord Jesus Christ. Then He handed us His pilgrim’s staff, telling us to guard it carefully until one called Patrick should visit our island. From



that day those who saw Our Lord have never become old. Our children and their children have grown into old, old men, while we have remained young and strong.”

The staff was then brought and given to Patrick, and the following day he set sail once more, and it is said the staff was known for hundreds of years after his death as “The Staff of Jesus,” and kept first at Armagh and afterwards at Dublin, where, during the Reformation in the reign of Henry VIII., it was burned by some soldiers in the public square.

Patrick first tried to land at Wicklow, but in those days all countries were infested with bands of robbers; consequently the inhabitants were



The unfriendly natives even refusing to give him some river-fish.

rarely friendly to strangers, and Patrick fared no better than others. Indeed, he was received so badly that he and his followers were compelled to return to their ship, the unfriendly natives even refusing to give him some river-fish which he asked for, as they needed food. And because of this refusal, it is said that the inhabitants never again found fish in their river.

At another place Patrick was met with such great violence by the inhabitants that he again had to retreat to his ship. As he sailed away his sailors are said to have seen the people on the shore commence to sink in the sands, which suddenly became like a bog, and the tide rose rapidly and swept over fields and houses, leaving a great salt marsh where the town had been.

The next port Patrick reached, the people



had already heard of him, and they recalled the words of an old magician who was supposed to have said:

“One shall arrive having his head shaved and bearing a crooked stick, who shall destroy our gods, subdue our kings and cause us to follow his leadership for ever and ever.”

Therefore, the king of that part of Ireland, seeing Bishop Patrick with his shaved head and carrying his staff, declined to let him and his followers land.

Patrick, however, advanced to meet the people alone, hoping this would disarm their anger, when it is said that a savage dog sprang towards him; then, quite suddenly, it stiffened as though turned to stone, whereupon a man, almost a giant, seeing this, rushed at Patrick brandishing his sword, when he too became stiff and stone-like, until, looking at the gentle face of the bishop, his anger melted and he felt ashamed of his fierceness. Then Bishop Patrick blessed him, and the man moved

forward and stood beside him, anxious to protect Patrick from the rest of the fierce people. But having seen these wonders, they were willing to





Thus the people were free for all time from the fear of poisonous reptiles.

allow Patrick to remain, and agreed to listen to his preaching.

So at last Patrick commenced his great mission-work, and travelled from place to place, preaching and building churches. Kings, warriors and poor people heard him gladly, and many believed and became his followers.

Once, at Munster, Bishop Patrick was baptising a king, and during the sacrament, as he raised his hands in blessing, his staff fell accidentally upon the king's foot, the sharp point making a painful wound. But the king, thinking it part of the cere-



mony, bore the pain without flinching; whereupon the wound is said to have miraculously healed as Patrick took up his staff.

The greatest miracle that Patrick is said to have performed in Ireland is the following :

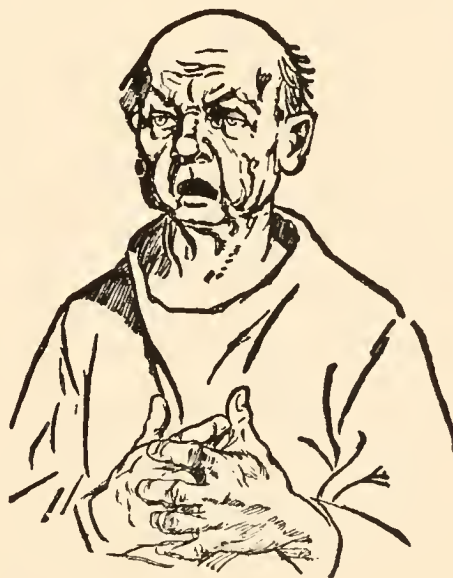
Parts of Ireland, the beautiful Emerald Isle, with its wonderful green trees and grass, were infested with swarms of poisonous snakes and all sorts of creeping reptiles.

The people in these districts dreaded these monsters, their lives being in great danger from their venomous bites. Hearing of this wonderful stranger, called Bishop Patrick, they went to him and asked him to deliver their country from these dreadful creatures.

Then Patrick took his staff and went from forest to forest, and all the poisonous, crawling things crept swiftly through the long grass after

him, wriggling and hissing, their bright eyes gleaming like diamonds. So swiftly they followed that when Patrick reached a steep precipice overhanging the sea, they were unable to stop, but went over the edge in a great writhing mass, splashing into the deep sea far below, and thus the people were freed for all time from the fear of poisonous reptiles.

One story told in connection with Patrick is very funny. A robber stole one of his sheep which he ate. In spite of the Bishop's appeal to the unknown thief to confess his sin and repent, the robber showed no signs of disturbance; so St. Patrick is said to have called to his sheep



one Sunday morning from the pulpit, and at once a sound of bleating came from the inside of the robber, who for some reason formed one of St. Patrick's congregation, probably hoping by this means to avert suspicion from himself. However, after that, there was nothing for him to do but repent of his evil ways.

At last the time came for Bishop Patrick to decide upon a place in which to build a cathedral, to be the head of all the smaller churches he had built. He had set his heart upon having this upon a wooded hill, in the district now known as Armagh. When Patrick asked Daeri, the owner of the hill, to be allowed to build the cathedral there, Daeri refused his permission but gave him some land in a valley at the foot of it.

One of Daeri's knights, hoping to get Patrick into trouble, is supposed to have turned a horse of Daeri's loose into Bishop Patrick's land, and next morning when the knight went for the horse it was dead.

Upon hearing the tale from the knight, the legend says Daeri gave him orders to slay Patrick, but as he set out to do this, Daeri fell dead, and his wife in great fear sent a messenger to St. Patrick beseeching his help.



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The messenger and the knight arrived together. Thereupon, Patrick, who knew just what had happened, blessed some water and told them to sprinkle the horse with it. Immediately the horse got upon its feet, so, realising the power of the water, they hastened back to Daeri's wife, who was anxiously awaiting them. On hearing what had happened, she immediately sprinkled Daeri also with the water, who at once recovered and became quite friendly with St. Patrick.



The following story is doubtless quite true, and is found in the Book of Armagh.

Though Daeri refused to let Patrick have his hill to build on, he gave him some land in

the valley, and also a large cauldron of foreign manufacture saying :

“ There ! this cauldron is thine.”

“ I thank you,” replied Patrick quietly.

When Daeri reached home he said to his wife :

“ What a fool the fellow was only to say ‘ I thank you ’ for a wonderful cauldron like that ! Ho ! slaves,” he called to his men, “ return at once and bring back the gift I have just given to this man.”

When his slaves brought it to him he cried :

“ Well, what did he say to you, churls ? ”

“ He said, ‘ I thank you, ’ ” they replied in astonishment.

“ ‘ I thank you ’ when I give, and ‘ I thank you ’ when I take away ! Why, that is surely good, and for his ‘ I thank you, ’ he shall have the

cauldron after all. Ho! slaves, take back the cauldron to this Patrick once more.”

This time Daeri went with them, and complimented Patrick upon his self-control both when he gained and when he lost a thing. He also told him he could build his cathedral on the top of the hill. Patrick at once went to see the site, and on the hill-top there was a roe lying on the grass, with her little fawn beside her.

His companions were about to kill it, but Patrick prevented them, and laid the roe on his shoulder and carried it to a place of safety, the fawn trotting quietly after him. And upon the very spot where he saw the roe, the altar of Armagh Cathedral now stands.

Patrick lived to a good old age and spent the rest of his days between the See of Armagh, which he established, and his favourite place of



“There! this cauldron is thine.”



retirement called Saul, waited upon by a holy woman, named Brigit, who was glad to serve so good a man.

It was at Saul where he fell ill, and feeling that he was about to die, he set out for Armagh, in order that he might be buried in the cathedral. But he is said to have been told in a vision this was not to be; so he returned to Saul, where shortly after he died.

Then his bier was placed on a cart and drawn by oxen who went, without guidance, to Down, now called Down Patrick, and there Patrick was buried.

At the news of his death the clergy flocked from all parts of Ireland to celebrate the funeral. This took place with much ceremony, and a great blaze of lights, so that the darkness was dispelled and it seemed as though night did not fall. Therefore the people in later years declared the sun stood still for three days after Patrick's death.

On one occasion when Patrick was preaching on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, or Three in One, he stooped and plucked a piece of shamrock, using this little three-leafed plant as a symbol. Therefore the shamrock is always worn on March 17th, which is called St. Patrick's Day, because Patrick died March 17th, A.D. 465.

Whether St. Patrick performed all the miracles he is said to have done, or whether he drove the snakes from Ireland or no, does not matter ; the chief thing is, that he drove sin and idolatry from the land and did great and useful work, living a good and holy life, and was indeed worthy to be made St. Patrick, the Patron Saint of Ireland.



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